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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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1. The account given in the report [REDACTED] is factual, fair and dispassionate. I have the following to add concerning other foreign broadcasts:

(a) The Belgrade Radio broadcasts, to my knowledge, twice daily, for one-half hour at 1130 and 1900 Central European Time on short wave lengths. Reception at 1130 is very good. Broadcasts include news and commentaries in Czech and Slovak. They are aimed at Communists; non-Communists find them dull and burdened with Marxist propaganda. They have a steady audience, however. With certain improvements, Belgrade Radio could become a valuable link in the system of broad-

(b) The Rome Radio, with two daily broadcasts, is also worthy of note. The 1330 broadcast, one-half hour of straight news, bad comment and music, has an excellent reception on most wireless sets, but it is not too well known.

(a) The Vatican is listened to by the rank and file of the clergy, I believe. Its evening broadcast can be heard fairly well.

(d) I have spoken to some people who listen regularly to the Malard Radio. Its propaganda effect is slight. I believe the station is run by Slovak emigres of Fascist leanings.

2. The British Broadcasting Co (BBC) evening broadcast at 21:30 seemed to me to have the best reception of all the stations. Usually it can be heard without any disturbance. I always had more difficulty tuning in on the RDP (Paris) 2000 program. I should say the BBC is still preferred by a majority of those seeking information. The Radio Diffusion Francaise (RDF) has the advantage of being able to devote more time to straight news. The BBC is more concise. The BBC has by far the "freshest" news but in its newscasts it devoted amazingly little time to Czech affairs. Major trials, for example, have been dismissed in two sentences. The probable explanation is lack of time and the British Government's labor policy. Czech listeners, however, believe the reason is pure lack of interest and enterprise. It is the BBC method of presenting world news that is preferred.

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3. I believe the Voice of America (VOA) is preferred by the working people, the "man in the street." If the reception could be improved, the VOA would have an enormous audience, both for news and comment. There has been slight improvement in reception in recent months. I had better reception on short wave lengths than on medium.

4. The delay in reporting news on Czechoslovakia is a point for criticism of foreign broadcasts. I believe the main reason for this delay is the existence in Prague of only one Western news agency (the UP) which has a staff of only one or two. The bulk of the news on Czechoslovakia which was broadcast by the Western radio was supplied by the news agencies. The UP, AF, AFP and Reuters were, I think, doing a good job until the arrest of Oatis in April and the departure of the last Western reporter in June. While the Western press was represented in full strength, and the coverage of Czech affairs was as good as was possible under the circumstances, I heard little complaint of the lack of news on Czechoslovakia. Any deficiencies were probably due to maladroit handling by the stations. Certainly the news agencies were doing their best to "storify" rumors and official handouts.

5. The greatest care must be exercised in choosing the Czech politicians who are to talk to the people in Czechoslovakia. Many politicians have lost all prestige. My comments on those recommended [redacted] are as follows:

- (a) Beidrich..... Little known among the people.
- (b) Osusky..... Very little known to the man in the street and those who do know him remember him as a discredited diplomat because of his feuds with the beloved Dr Benes. He spent most of his life abroad.
- (c) Drabek..... A good choice.
- (d) Hrebik..... A good choice.
- (e) Lettrich..... Slovaks would probably appreciate him.

To these I should add Václav Maier, whom I believe is in London. He is probably the most popular of exiled Czech politicians.

6. Ferdinand Peroutka's talks on Radio Free Europe (RFE) at 1730 on Sunday and Monday are widely listened to. Every effort should be made to ensure good reception of these talks.

7. Generally speaking, the Czechs are willing to listen to anybody, as long as he has something to say, but they will more readily believe persons in whom they had confidence such as Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart on BBC, Peroutka on RFE, and Duchacek.

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